

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

No. 1026, NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, JULY 28, 1888.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

AT THE MOMENT OF VICTORY.

By C. L. PIRKIS.

Author of "A Dateless Bargain," etc.

CHAPTER XII.

MADGE, in a moment of exasperation, had wished that gout would seize Sir Peter and hold him prisoner for a week, while she and Lance arranged their affairs to their own liking. Gout, however, was far too elderly and dignified a complaint to attack one of his essentially juvenile temperament.

A single case of measles occurred to a six-months-old baby in a hamlet about fifteen miles distant. It seemed a perfectly natural dispensation of Providence that Sir Peter should be the second victim.

"Don't know what's the matter with me, Lance," he said pitifully, "I feel as if my legs didn't belong to me."

"Perhaps you've tired them a bit," said Lance, suggesting a far-away possibility.

"I would sooner have it myself twenty times over," said the worthy medical practitioner who was called in; "how on earth we're to keep him in one room without a lock or key is more than I can think."

When by dint of combined efforts they succeeded in getting Sir Peter to bed, they could have fancied that his pillow was stuffed with steel springs which sent his head up with a jerk as soon as it was laid upon it, so perpetually were his eyes and ears on the alert for all that went on around him.

His correspondence was a great anxiety to him.

"You'll see to my letters, Lance, won't

you?" he begged; "and"—this added in a timorous whisper—"you'll keep my study-door locked and the key in your pocket, won't you?"

"Oh, you mean lock Stubbs in, and not let him out till the letters are all answered?" queried Lance.

"No, no, no." Here the whisper grew more confidential still. "I mean keep Lady Judith out, in case—in case she might—you know—you know."

"Oh yes, I know," answered Lance reassuringly. "I'll look after your letters, never fear, Uncle Peter, and keep down the correspondence right enough."

Lance's idea of "keeping down the correspondence" was simple and effective. He evaded Sir Peter's order to lock the study-door by never going near it at all.

"Bring the letters and pen and ink into the gun-room, Stubbs," he said; "while I overhaul my fishing tackle, you can read them out to me, and I'll do a Sir Peter and dictate replies."

So to the gun-room the letters were accordingly taken, and Lance, with a cigarette between his teeth and his fishing gear in his hand, quickly disposed of Sir Peter's correspondence.

Mr. Stubbs read the first letter, and then waited in silence for a reply to be forthcoming.

"Go on," said Lance. "We'll read them off half-a-dozen at a time, and then I dare say one answer will do for the lot."

The first half-dozen consisted mainly of appeals for advice on matters concerning the internal working of certain charities of which Sir Peter was president.

"Toss all that lot into the waste-paper basket," said Lance. "They'll answer themselves if they're let alone. If they don't get any advice from Sir Peter, they'll

conclude they'll have to do without it. Now we'll go on to the next half-dozen."

They chanced to be appeals for help from various benevolent institutions.

"Ten pounds to each all round for that lot, Stubbs, and tell them not to bother again," said the young man. "And that'll do for this morning—the rest will keep till to-morrow; I'm off to the stables now."

If he had known what letter lay unread in the packet which Mr. Stubbs proceeded to look up in Sir Peter's secretaire, he would scarcely have decreed in such light-hearted fashion that "the rest would keep" till the morrow.

He detailed to Madge, later on in the day, the easy, comfortable manner in which he got through his morning's work.

"The truth of it is, Madge," he said, "half the world fret themselves to fiddle-strings over nothing at all! Rest on your oars and let the wind carry you along whenever you've a chance, that's what I say."

Madge, drawing conclusions from a contrasting experience, was disposed to contest the matter with him. "What if the wind carries you the wrong way?" she asked.

"Oh, then try your muscles and have a tussle for it," said Lance, half-way up the stairs to Sir Peter's room, in order to explain to him his patent way of disposing of troublesome correspondence.

"Don't, don't," cried Madge, guessing his intention, and following him at express speed. "It will send him into a fever and give him a bad night."

"It'll make him sleep like a top," persisted Lance, and forthwith, much to the consternation of the nurse in attendance, he proceeded to recount to the old gentleman his morning's work.

Sir Peter was wrapped up in flannels; his face was very red; his eyes were streaming. His face grew redder still, his eyes streamed worse than ever, as he listened to Lance's description of "the mass of work" he had got through in a quarter of an hour.

"It'll take weeks to undo the mischief you've done," he moaned, and then his cough stopped him.

Lance vanished discreetly before the combined wrath of Madge and the nurse.

Madge volunteered her services in the way of opening and assorting letters.

"I can at least send temporary answers and tell everybody to wait till you're well again," she said soothingly.

"The very thing, Madge; the very

thing," cried Sir Peter, all serenity once more. "You open my letters—no one else, remember—and tell every one they shall have my entire attention so soon as I get about again. Any letters of importance put carefully on one side in the right-hand drawer of my secretaire—lock it up and keep the key yourself."

And then he coughed incessantly again, and had to eat black currant lozenges for the rest of the afternoon.

As Madge crossed the gallery leading from Sir Peter's room, she paused at a big flowering myrtle which nearly filled a window-recess. Letting her eyes wander for one moment to the outside greenery and flower-garden, she was conscious of a sensation as physically painful as the scent of the myrtle was physically pleasant.

Yet it was nothing very much out of the common that met her view—merely Lance arranging sketching stool and easel on the green sward below the terrace, under the shade of a big sycamore, whence a good view could be had of the magnificent sweep of mountain scenery without daring the heat of an afternoon sun.

Now, purely as a matter of common sense, Madge ought to have been delighted at Miss Shore's promptness in endeavouring to carry out her wishes. And as for Lance, well, she had seen him scores of times performing the same office for the numerous young ladies who had fallen in love with the mountain, and had forthwith conceived the desire to caricature it in wish-washy colours on a square of pasteboard.

Yet, nevertheless, Madge, as she noted the graceful, undulating outline of the dull grey figure against the shining background of a laurel hedge, and the lingering assiduity with which Lance adjusted the easel, had to do battle all over again with the unaccountable prejudices with which the very first sight of a beautiful face had inspired her.

CHAPTER XIII.

MADGE, true to her promise, seated herself after breakfast next morning at Sir Peter's writing-table, informing Mr. Stubbs of her intention of opening the invalid's letters and dictating their replies.

Mr. Stubbs, all obsequious attention, seated himself in his usual place at a smaller table at her right hand.

Madge's prejudices had made themselves heard respecting Mr. Stubbs as well as

Miss Shore. She had conceived for Sir Peter's private secretary an intense dislike, the ground of which did not seem to be covered entirely by the fact of her having discovered him in what appeared to be a listening attitude.

She had tried to imbue Lance with her notions, hoping that from his wider experience of men and their ways she might get wherewithal to substantiate her shadowy repugnance to the man.

"I am sure he is sly and underhand," she had said; "and he looks, looks, looks at me whenever he comes near me, as if he were taking stock of everything I do or say, or think, even."

Lance had characteristically laughed off the idea.

"I never knew any one like you for taking fancies into your head," he had said. "Why, if I lived twenty years in the house with the man, it wouldn't occur to me to notice whether he turned his eyes up or down, this way or that. He writes a good hand, and he does what he's told to do, and what more in reason can be expected of him?"

Madge was not a bad woman of business when she gave her mind to it. She ran over one-half of Sir Peter's correspondence lightly enough, dictating brief and temporary replies; Mr. Stubbs's pen failed to keep pace with her fluent dictating, so, as he wrote, she continued opening the remaining letters and mastering their contents.

One among those to which Lance had been too lazy to give his attention, had an Australian post-mark.

"Dear me! Sir Peter's fame has reached the antipodes," was her mental comment as she broke the seal.

But when her eye had mastered the first few sentences, mental comment she had none to make, for the simple reason that her brain was in a state of chaos.

It was a bulky letter, some two or three sheets in length, but was written in a round schoolboy's hand which rendered it easy reading.

It was dated from "Rutland Bay Settlement, Western Australia," and ran as follows:

"SIR,—I must beg your indulgence for the liberty I am taking in thus addressing you. The remarkable circumstances I have to communicate must be my excuse.

"Let me begin by stating that I am a minister of the Wesleyan persuasion, and sole spiritual adviser of the rough but not unkindly miners who constitute the scanty

population of this place; also, that my statements can be very easily substantiated by reference to some of the leading members of the community whose names I subjoin.

"Now for my story.

"Sixteen years ago, when this settlement consisted in all of fifty souls, there occurred during the equinoxes a terrible wreck on this coast. A vessel went down with all hands, in the night—at least, so it was supposed from the spars and wreckage washed on shore at daybreak. Something else besides spars and wreckage was washed up with the tide—a portion of the mainmast with a woman and an infant lashed to it. The woman appeared, from her dress, to be a nurse; but she had been so terribly injured during the gale that she died as soon as she was brought to shore. The child was a fine little boy of about a year old, dressed as a gentleman's child. His linen was marked simply with the initials G. C.

"All this, sir, occurred about ten years before I came to the colony. When I, by the direction of our Conference, took upon myself the office of shepherd to these stray sheep, this infant had grown into a handsome boy, and was of so strikingly refined an appearance that so soon as I set eyes on him assisting the miners in the lighter portion of the work, I asked the question:

"'What gentleman's son is that?'

"The miners who had sheltered and brought him up were the roughest set of men I had ever lived among, but for all that had treated the boy with the kindest consideration, had taught him to read and write, and had, on account of the extreme fragility of his health, allowed him to lead an almost idle life, evidently looking upon him as one cast in a different mould to themselves.

"I took the boy in hand immediately on my arrival in the settlement, supplied him with books, and carried his education as forward as possible.

"So much for the boy. Now for the sequel to my story.

"About six months ago a vessel put in here, a Canadian trader, manned by a crew of divers nationalities. One of the seamen, a Scotchman, by name John Rutherford, had a strange story to tell. He said that sixteen years previously he was serving on board a Mexican passenger-boat which had been wrecked off this coast. He, with some others, had taken to the boats, and, after many perils, had been picked up by a Canadian schooner. Subsequently, he had

joined the Canadian merchant service. He gave full particulars concerning the terrible wreck of the Mexican boat and the names of the passengers, so far as he could remember them. Among them, he said, was an English gentleman, a Mr. Gervase Critchett, and his wife, a South American lady, and infant boy, who had hurriedly taken flight from La Guaya, North Mexico, on account of an insurrection threatening there. Rutherford spoke of the father's despairing agony at his inability to save his wife and child, of his lashing the nurse and the boy with his own hands to the mast, and of his frantic endeavours to make his wife leap into the boat as it pushed away in the darkness. He related also, how that on the previous night, when the gale had first burst on them, Mr. Critchett had taken him on one side, and, in view of possible danger to himself and the chance of his child being saved, had related various particulars concerning himself—how that he was brother to Sir Peter Critchett, of Upton Castle; that his marriage had been solemnised at the British Consulate at La Guaya, and his boy's birth had been duly registered there—

"Madge, Madge!"—at this moment said Lance's voice just outside the door—"are you going to shut yourself up with the ink-bottle all the morning? Can't you come for half an hour's canter?"

Madge started. Her thoughts were far away from Upton, among the wild miners of Australia, and yet, if the truth be told, the under-current of those thoughts carried but one name in their depths—Lance's, and Lance's only.

Instinctively she jumped from her chair and met Lance at the door. It would have been too dreadful, it seemed to her, if, without word of warning or kindly preliminary hint, he had stood behind her and had read over her shoulder the story which gave Sir Peter an heir to his name and his wealth.

"I can't ride to-day," she said, steadying her voice as well as she could. "I mean to work all the morning at Sir Peter's letters, and then I have to drive with Lady Judith to Lower Upton."

"How white you look! Have you a head-ache?" interrupted Lance. "Look here, Madge, I want to show you my last new fowling-piece; it came down by the first train this morning." And there and then outside in the hall he exhibited his latest acquisition in deadly weapons, unscrewing and putting together again its

internal arrangements, descanting meanwhile in enthusiastic fashion on its vast superiority over all others he had ever been possessed of.

Madge's thoughts were in a whirl. It was with difficulty that she managed to keep up a fair show of interest in Lance's talk. She trembled for the safety of the letter, which, in her haste to intercept Lance, she had thrown open on the writing-table.

She went back in five minutes' time to the study to find the letter folded neatly in half with a paper-weight on top of it.

She flashed an enquiring glance at Mr. Stubbs, who sat, pen in hand, waiting for further instruction.

"The wind fluttered it off the table," he said quietly by way of explanation. "The draught is very great when the study-door is opened as well as the outside door."

Madge felt the impulse to ask the question, "Did you take advantage of the friendly draught and master the contents of the letter?" almost irresistible. Her eyes and flushing cheeks asked it plainly enough; but Mr. Stubbs's pasty, expressionless features made no sign, and his eyes appeared fixed on nothing at all.

She had no more ideas to bestow on Sir Peter's correspondence. Everything in life had shrunk into insignificance beside the baleful tidings which those few sheets of closely-written paper had brought.

FROM THE THAMES TO THE GARONNE.

A RUN TO WINE LAND.

To those who require complete rest and change of scene, a sea voyage, even a short one, can be recommended as one of the most pleasant forms of holiday. When once on board there is none of that bustle and undue activity which characterise most modern holiday-making, and too often render it a further trial to already overstrung nerves. These considerations weighed with us, when a friend and myself, both lovers of the sea, decided to spend a portion of our annual holiday in taking a brief sea trip.

Our destination was Bordeaux, about three days' voyage from London, and we decided to make the passage by one of the boats of the General Steam Navigation Company, leaving Saint Katharine's Wharf for that port every Friday. The company offer return tickets at greatly reduced prices

to passengers going and returning by the same vessel; and persons availing themselves, as we did, of this privilege, have about four or five days ashore, and yet are back in London within ten days from the date of their departure. We were most fortunate in securing berths in the *Albatross*, the largest and best of the company's steamers. Amongst other advantages, it may be mentioned that the saloon and sleeping-cabins are quite separate, that there is an excellent bath-room, a good piano in the saloon, and on deck a ladies' drawing-room, and a cosy smoking-room. It should be added that the cuisine is excellent, and tariff moderate. These details are by no means unimportant when the passage is one of days, and not, like crossing the Channel, a matter of a few hours.

We left London on a fine summer afternoon, with a light north-westerly breeze, and every prospect of a good passage. The number of saloon passengers was very small, and we sat down to meals a party of six, all of the sterner sex, there being no lady passengers on this occasion. By 11 p.m. we had passed the South Foreland, and the fine electric lights at Calais and Grisnez. We then turned in to our comfortable berths for a good night's rest, to which the smooth sea contributed.

At seven o'clock the next day (for on shipboard every one rises early) most of us were on deck again, sipping our morning coffee, and enjoying the fresh, ozone-laden air. There was just a faint outline of the Isle of Wight coast, Saint Catherine's Point probably, on our starboard bow. On enquiry we found that the ship's course was shaped from the Royal Sovereign light-vessel, off Eastbourne, to the Caskets, in the Channel Islands. These dangerous rocks, with their warning lighthouse, were reached at 2.30 p.m. Another day passed, the weather still lovely, and sea smooth. The passengers amused themselves with books, or played quoits on the deck, or lounged in the smoking-room. The glimpses of the French coast were few, and we passed hardly any vessels, except the homeward-bound Bordeaux steamer of the General Steam Navigation Company, with which we exchanged greetings. When we were again ready for our bunks, the vessel was off the Ile de Bas, and passed Ushant during the night, when a good deal of rolling was experienced.

Our second morning found us out of sight of land, in the Bay of Biscay, with an unwontedly smooth sea. Several por-

poises were seen shortly afterwards, which enlivened us with their merry gambols around the ship, and a small whale was sighted spouting far out to the westward.

Off Belle Isle we took on board, from a very neat pilot-boat of yawl build, the pilot who was to conduct us from the mouth of the Gironde to our destination. He was a typical old French "salt," with keen grey eyes, and weather-tanned countenance. Unlike most English pilots, who usually get themselves up in landsman's attire, our pilot was dressed in blue blouse, wide trousers, and a broad, slouch hat. We found him chatty and communicative; his talk being, of course, mostly in French, with a sprinkling of English.

About six o'clock in the evening, when near La Baleine lighthouse, we saw a mirage; the houses, trees, etc., on the mainland, appearing inverted in mid-air, caused a very curious effect.

At 10 p.m. we had passed the celebrated Cordouan Rock, on which a lighthouse—though not the present structure—has stood since the fourteenth century.

Shortly afterwards we entered the Gironde, at the mouth of which there are many dangerous sandbanks. It is excellently lighted, however, as are all the French coasts, and in this vicinity we counted at one time no less than thirteen lights, each sufficiently distinctive in character to prevent the possibility of mistake.

Early the next day we anchored off Pauillac, till the tide should serve for the passage up the river. Here were one or two of the Pacific mail steamers, and several English and foreign vessels. We had now fairly reached the wine-growing district, and, on proceeding up the Gironde, passed several vineyards, each with its château, the names of which (*Laffitte*, *Margaux*, *La Rose*, etc.) are familiar to all claret drinkers.

It being then early in the season the vines were very small, and looked not unlike diminutive currant-bushes. They were trained to espaliers, and did not rise much more than two feet from the ground. They grow in gravelly and sandy soil on either side the river, being separated from its banks by a narrow strip of marshy land. There was nothing whatever in the appearance of the vineyards to attract attention, and those of us who were seeing them for the first time were therefore somewhat disappointed. Of course, at vintage time, the vines are much taller, and the bustle

and activity then everywhere apparent, give a temporary interest to the scene.

As we ascended the river the scenery improved, and the banks became steeper and more wooded; numerous chalets, all very white and dazzling, came in sight, and here and there bold patches of bare rock.

At ten o'clock on the third day from leaving London, we anchored just below Bordeaux, again waiting for the tide, which in this river is very uncertain in its action. Hard by us were moored two of the fine steamers of the Messageries Maritimes, just returned from voyages to the East. At noon our ship was able to come alongside the quay, and the passengers were soon on terra firma. The Customs officials kept us a long time waiting in the burning sun, and we found the glare most trying. After depositing our traps at one of the hotels, we went out to explore the town.

The extensive quays and noble river frontage of three miles, lined with ships of all nationalities, first attracted attention; and then we turned to the city, with its numerous wide thoroughfares, handsome boulevards and squares, rows of large, well-appointed houses, and excellent shops.

Bordeaux appears to be a very clean place, and even in its old quarter, where the streets are narrower, if more picturesque, we noticed none of the squalor and filth too often to be met with in Continental towns.

First amongst the public squares of the town must be named the Place des Quinconces, on the river-side, a fine open space with trees. Its entrance is marked by two lofty rostral towers or columns, which are conspicuous for a considerable distance round. Hereabouts a citadel once stood. Further up the river is the bridge, of which the Bordelais are justly proud. It consists of no less than seventeen arches, its total length being one thousand one hundred and ninety-six feet. A very interesting remnant of the old Roman city, formerly called Burdigala, to which our steps were next directed, is the Palais Gallien, a portion of an ancient amphitheatre or circus, which we found well worth a visit.

Of churches there are several, and amongst them may be specially mentioned that of St. Seurin, with fine carving over the south porch, and St. Michel, noted for its lofty, detached tower. Beneath this tower, in a large, dry chamber, are over seventy mummies—a somewhat ghastly spectacle, over which, however,

the gardienne waxes eloquent, and enters into surprising details about each of the objects under her charge. The Cathedral (St. André) has two elegant spires, but its interior is disappointing, and noticeable only for the extreme width of the nave, a feature which destroys all symmetry of effect.

Besides the churches there are many fine public buildings in the city, notably the Opera House, Hôtel de Ville, Bourse, etc., which the visitor will soon find out for himself. He should not fail, too, to visit the Jardin Public, the principal place of promenade, which is well laid out, and where a very fine band is to be heard on Sundays and Thursdays.

After seeing the principal buildings of the city, we next turned our attention to its chief business feature, viz., the wine trade; and having obtained an introduction to one of the leading firms of wine merchants, we bent our steps to the Quartier des Chartrons, where are situated most of the cellars, containing vast stores of the wines of the district. Armed with bougies, we descended into gloomy vaults of great size, each one filled with casks, piled two and three above one another, and containing wine in different stages of preparation. A pleasant vinous smell was everywhere noticeable, and, as we wandered through the different cellars, our good friends invited us now and again to taste the productions of this or that favourite vintage.

Some idea of the size and extent of these cellars may be formed when it is stated that the vaults we visited—almost the largest in Bordeaux—are capable of holding ten thousand casks of wine, and at the time of our visit, out of the season, there were more than seven thousand casks in store. Besides wine in casks, we were also shown several cellars of bins containing it in bottle.

At vintage time, which is usually the month of October, it is worth while to take the train to some of the vineyards in the Médoc district, orders to visit which can be obtained without difficulty from most of the wine merchants in the town. The scenes of activity and merriment then to be witnessed repay one for the time spent in making the expedition.

The date of our visit to Bordeaux, however, not being suitable for such an excursion, we decided to spend the remainder of our time at Arcachon, a well-known bathing village and winter resort. A pleasant train journey of about thirty-

five miles through the sandy district known as the Landes brought us to our destination. On the way we passed several woods of pine and evergreen oak, the former tapped for the resin, which is received in cups fastened to the trunks of the trees.

Arcachon is an exceedingly pretty place. It is situated on the Bassin, a large sea lake, noted for its oysters, whilst behind the village are fragrant pine woods, amongst which nestle the numerous villas, of chalet and bungalow type, composing the Ville d'Hiver. Here, in winter, there is quite a large English colony. On the shore, besides several pretty houses and some good hotels, is a picturesque château, once a favourite residence of the Empress Eugénie.

We took up our quarters at the Hôtel Continental, and certainly had no cause to regret the choice. It has a pleasant garden in front, with plenty of magnolias, roses, and other flowers, and cooling fountains at play; whilst behind is the fine stretch of sands at one's feet, with the sea beyond. During the warm weather, meals are served in a large verandah, protected from the sun by an awning; and thus, if so disposed, visitors can be nearly always in the open air.

Bathing is the great occupation at Arcachon in the summer time, and whole days are spent in the water by those most devoted to this form of enjoyment. There are no machines, but clothes are changed in small cabins under the hotels and other houses.

There are several good boating excursions to be made here, a favourite one being to the lighthouse on Cape Ferret. We ascended the tower of this lighthouse, and had a magnificent view from its summit. The Ile des Oiseaux, in the Bassin, should certainly be visited; also the oyster parks, the produce of which can be partaken of, with native wine, for a very moderate sum in any of the white hulks or cabins moored hard by.

In the Bassin there is plenty of fishing, and a favourite pastime is that of eel-spearing by torch-light—"pêche aux flambeaux." We hired a boat for this purpose, and left the shore at 11 p.m. one night, returning at three o'clock the next morning. The night was a very favourable one, being exceedingly dark, and the phosphorescence in the water each time the oars dipped was a very pretty sight. Our boatmen had fitted up, over the bows of the boat, a sort of iron cage, wherein were

placed pine logs, a store of which we took with us. When lighted, these gave a very brilliant light, serving to attract the fish, which on rising to the surface were speared with a seven or nine-pronged fork. No little dexterity is required in striking the eels, as they are exceedingly rapid in their movements, and quickly dart down out of sight. However, between us we secured some thirty or forty fish. One of our boatmen was unfortunate enough to lose his spear overboard in making an unusually deep lunge—a catastrophe which might have been avoided by the simple expedient of fastening to the spear-handle a loop of cord, which could be secured to the holder's wrist.

Those who are fond of entertainments will find all they want at the Casino, a very fine Moorish building in the Ville d'Hiver, containing two theatres, a concert-hall, library, reading-room, etc., and surrounded by beautiful grounds.

Our sojourn at Arcachon soon came to an end, and we left the village reluctantly for Bordeaux once more, there to rejoin the Albatross en route for home. Another evening was spent in the city, the whole populace of which seemed to have turned out, and to be enjoying their ices and various drinks in the cafés, or lounging about under the trees, listening to music. The heat was very great, and we were glad next morning when the steamer left the quay, and, speeding rapidly down the river, brought us soon to the region of fresh breezes.

There were more passengers this time, including several ladies, and a few children, who helped considerably to enliven us. We saw much fine scenery on the French coast, which had been passed at night on the outward voyage, otherwise all was the same as before; and after an uneventful passage our good ship arrived in the Thames on Sunday at midnight. We landed next morning, just ten days after leaving London, during which time we had travelled by sea some fourteen hundred miles, and spent nearly five days ashore. Our trip had been a most thoroughly successful one; and those who may follow our example, either wholly or in part, will certainly not regret it.

In conclusion, it may be of interest to readers to know that it is possible, without undue economy, for one to spend a most enjoyable ten days, accomplishing all described in this article—modifying details if desired—and yet return home with change out of a ten-pound note.

DR. JOHN DEE,

MATHEMATICIAN AND ASTROLOGER.

UNLIKE the Campbells or Davieses, the Dees—those of them who have made their mark—are not a numerous clan. The fullest biographical dictionaries name only four: our astrologer; his son Arthur; a Bishop of Peterborough, who preached before Charles the First in praise of celibacy, and married two wives; and a lawyer (son of Charles the First's physician), who defended Dr. Sacheverell, and is looked on as one of the shining lights of Merchant Taylors' School; and of these none can be called famous except the first.

His father was gentleman sewer (that is, carver) to Henry the Eighth; and Henry, when, in 1546, he founded his College of Trinity, Cambridge, made Dee, already a Fellow of Saint John's, one of the first batch of Fellows, making him also "under-reader of Greek," in which tongue there were at that time very few English proficients.

Dee had qualified himself for his work by working, while at Saint John's, eighteen hours a day, giving himself only four hours' sleep—John Wesley was content with no more—and two for meals and recreation. But he was no dry student; his first work as Greek reader was to astonish the Cantabs. In his own words:

"I did sett forth a Greek comedy of Aristophanes, named the Peace, with the performance of the beetle or scarabeus, his flying up to Jupiter's palace with a man and his basket of victuals on his back; whereat was great wondering, and many vain reports spread abroad of the means how that was effected."

Dee, in fact, showed himself a clever stage-machinist; but such a reputation was dangerous in those days. A little earlier, no one would have thought anything of it; for similar effects were wrought by the clergy in the mystery plays. But, somehow, the Reformation made men put down to witchcraft everything which they could not understand, and which in "the ages of faith," when miracles were of every-day occurrence, would have passed without inquiry.

So young Dee, Fellow of Trinity, and Greek reader to his college, was at once dubbed a magician, and, despite all his gainsaying, the evil reputation clung to him all his life, and probably had much to do with determining his career. Perhaps he was not so much annoyed as some men would

have been; for, though born in London, he was a Radnorshire man, descended—like most Welshmen—from the Kings of the country. However, Dee's contemporaries believed him to be actually in league with the devil, and treated him accordingly.

Sorcerer, however, by repute, he was astronomer by profession; and was one of the first Englishmen who noticed and adopted the inventions of Mercator (his great globes) and of Gemma the Frieslander (inventor of the astronomer's brass staff and brass ring), and of the other followers of Copernicus.

Dee brought over a set of instruments from the Low Countries, and gave them to Trinity, where they may still be seen; and the College, in return, gave him a testimonial under their common seal, with which, in 1548, he went to Louvain, to investigate "the original and fountain of arts and sciences," that is, the intellectual philosopher's stone, which should be the key to all knowledge. Here he became a close friend of Mercator, and set up a school for logic, arithmetic, and the use of astronomical instruments, to which many noblemen, English as well as foreign, resorted. Thence to Paris (1550)—the fashion of going from university to university had not died out. Here he lectured on Euclid, "mathematically, physically, and Pythagorically," with such acceptance—for the thing had never been done before in any university in Christendom—that the big hall of the College of Rheims was full, and many had to hear what they could through the windows. They wanted to make him one of their Regius professors of mathematics, at a salary of two hundred crowns, but he refused the tempting offer, as he did, four years later, a similar offer from Oxford. The grounds of his refusal he does not state. He knew from his father's case the uncertainty of princes' favour; that father had doubtless thought that under a Welsh King a young Welshman of old lineage had only to come to town to be sure of preferment, and he had never risen above the "gentleman sewer." Edward the Sixth did give Dee a living, Upton-on-Severn; but he did not long enjoy the quiet which enabled him to push on his studies. No sooner had Mary come to the throne, than two informers, Prideaux and Ferrers, said he was in league with Elizabeth's servants to take away the Queen's life by magic or by poison. He was imprisoned, and his papers seized; and though the Star Chamber "discharged him

of all suspicion of treason," Bishop Bonner, finding that his bedfellow in prison had been Green, the martyr, kept him to examine into the state of his faith.

Then comes one of those little puzzles which often baffle the student: "Master Dee," described as Bonner's Chaplain, was present at the examination of Philpot and other sufferers; and Foxe, who, when his book first came out, mentioned Dee's "persecution by Bonner," wholly suppressed his name in his later editions.

Can Dee have taken office under Bonner? Or was the Chaplain only a namesake? Anyhow, Dee felt himself safe enough to petition Mary about the old manuscripts, of which a vast number, he said, were still to be had of the "fletchers," who had bought them when the monasteries and colleges were pillaged, to feather arrows withal. These would make a right royal library, and he undertook to make the thing complete by getting copies of famous manuscripts in the Vatican, in Venice and other Italian towns, and in Paris and Vienna. Mary died soon after; and with Elizabeth's accession came promise of favour in other ways. "Where my brother," said the Queen, "hath given him a crown, I will give him a noble;" but he didn't get it. She promised him the mastership of Saint Katherine's Hospital; but when Dr. Mallet died, Dee was not appointed. Dudley had astrological leanings, and had employed Dee to calculate a fit day for the coronation; but Dudley either could not or would not do anything for him, and Dee in disgust went in 1562 to Antwerp to arrange for the publishing of his books. While there he got hold of some rare manuscripts, among them Abbot Trithemius's "Steganographia," the earliest known treatise on cipher writing, a subject which ought to have recommended him to "Spider Cecil."

It was probably about this time that he made his voyage to Saint Helena, his account of which—"Cotton Manuscripts"—is surely worth printing.

In 1563 he was at Presburg, and was well received by Emperor Maximilian the Second, to whom he had dedicated his "Monas Hieroglyphica." His living? Well, all Elizabeth did for him was to order her Archbishop, Parker, to give him ten years' leave of absence. She promised him almost everything that fell vacant, including the Deanery of Gloucester, but somehow somebody else was always put in

at the last. The notion—referred to in the preface he wrote for Billingsley's "Euclid"—that he was "a companion of the helhounds, and a caller and conjurer of wicked and damned spirits," probably stood in his way. Elizabeth, with her many enemies, had to be somewhat careful about Church preferment; but why did she go on deluding the poor man with promises?

So Dee lived quietly at Mortlake, studying, and gathering a noble library; now and then coming to the front, as when in 1572 a new star, and in 1577 a comet, gave him a chance to show his astronomical skill; or when, a wax image of the Queen, with a pin stuck in its breast, having been found in Lincoln's Inn Fields, he was hastily summoned to Court to counteract such a fearful portent.

Like many another dabbler in occult science, he seems to have taken up with the "dowsing rod," for after assuring Burghley that "in zeale to the best learning and knowledge, and in incredible toyle of body and mynde, very many yeres, therfor onely endured, most assuredly this lande never bred any man whose account therein can evidently be proved greater than mine," he offers to discover a gold or silver mine in England which the Queen is to have in exchange for all treasure-trove.

Twice, while he was at Mortlake, Elizabeth came to see him. The first time his wife had only been buried four hours. The Queen, therefore, stood outside and got him to bring out and explain his famous glass—a highly polished globe of "smoky quartz"—now in the British Museum, as are the consecrated cakes of wax, marked with strange hieroglyphs, which he used in his "ceremonies." This "glass," he used to say, was given him by an angel. His magic mirror was a highly polished disc of cannell coal; through various hands it has passed, leather case and all, to Lord Londesborough. But the instruments are naught without the man, with "his very clear, sanguine complexion, long beard as white as milk. A very handsome man and a great peacemaker," says Aubrey. "If any of the neighbours fell out, he would never let them alone till he had made them friends. He kept many stills going, and the children dreaded him because he was accounted a conjurer; yet he was a mighty good man." Clearly every inch an astrologer; for in this, as in many other cases, the dress is the man; his "long gown, with hanging sleeves and a slit," must have been as impressive as the

magic mirror. Like many other dreamers, he was a bad man of business. When the Queen added Long Leadenham, in Lincoln, to his Rectory of Upton, and desired Abp. Grindal to give a dispensation from residence—for he would undertake nothing involving the cure of souls—for the term of his life, he neglected to get the Great Seal attached to the document; whereby—as he complains in his “Compendious Rehearsal,” a sort of autobiography—he lost over one thousand pounds.

At this time he was busy over the reformation of the calendar. Pope Gregory the Thirteenth had, by bull, promulgated his great change in 1582; but this way of introducing the new system was not likely to make it popular in England, and though the best mathematicians—Thomas Digges, and Sir H. Savile (founder of the Oxford professorships), and Chambers—strongly recommended the change, the Bishops, including Grindal, said: “No; better let Christmas-day come round to spring-time, better any anomaly, than follow the lead of Rome, the mother of abominations, the mystery of iniquity that sitteth on the seven hills.” So the “old style” lasted one hundred and seventy years longer, to the confusion of English chronology, and the glorification of bigotry at the expense of science.

It is possible that, had the Bishops not stood out, something better even than the Gregorian system might have been introduced; for Dee proved that Rome was a little bit wrong—she had assumed that the Council of Nice was infallible as to dates—and, by ascertaining the actual position of the earth in regard to the sun at Christ’s birth, he had lessened yet more the difference which must always exist between civil and solar year.

Though beaten on the calendar question, Dee was about this time a good deal with the Queen. Once she gave him, at Windsor, an audience of four hours, while he talked about comets in general and that of 1577 in particular. Then Dr. Bayly, her physician, conferred with him about her grievous pangs and pains, as if he thought some enemy did “rack her with aches,” as Prospero threatened to do to Caliban. Then he was sent over—in 1578—to lay the state of her Majesty’s health before the German doctors; and two years after he drew maps and descriptions of all the Queen’s possessions in the various parts of the world.

And now, to his cost, Dee began to

dabble in spiritualism. Then, as now, the first requisite for such investigations was a “medium.” The magician seldom even pretends to be able to deal first hand with the spirits; even to secure the magic lamp he wants his Aladdin. So Dee consecrated one Barnabas Saul as “skryer” (descrier, or seer), he himself keeping the record of their “actions with spirits.” It was the angel Anael whom Saul was able to see by looking intently into Dee’s globe. Saul was seemingly a dull fellow, who never went beyond his tether; but, unhappily, Dee soon fell in with Edward Kelley, alias Talbot, a Worcester man, who had been expelled from Gloucester Hall, Oxford, and being convicted of forgery at Lancaster, had his ears cropped off. A black skull-cap concealed that disfigurement, and gave him such an oracular air that Dee—who never found out why the cap was worn—at once fell into his clutches.

Kelley called on Dee and asked to see something of his spiritual practices. “Nay,” said Dee, “I am no magician. I can show thee nothing.” At length, however, he brought out the globe, to which “aliqui angeli boni”—the pair, we may be sure, talked Latin of some sort—were bound to respond. Both Dee and Kelley then prayed, and were rewarded by the appearance (to Kelley) of the angel Uriel, who gave minute directions for invoking spirits, and ordered that henceforth Dee and Kelley should work together, Saul being put out in the cold.

Uriel also taught them how to construct the “holy table” and the “seal of God”—the instructions are to be found in the Soane Manuscripts—and added: “There is a hostile spirit, by name Lundrugguffa, who is seeking Dee’s ruin, and must be got rid of.”

So Kelley was installed as “skryer,” at a yearly salary of fifty pounds, besides “chances;” and for more than twenty-five years he played on Dee’s credulity, and by threats of leaving got a great deal more out of him than the stipulated amount. A thorough scoundrel, he had been sent by some of Dee’s clerical enemies, who were anxious to establish against him a charge of witchcraft. But he soon found he could do better for himself by getting into the old man’s confidence than by entrapping him into an admission that he had dealings with the devil. This would, at most, bring him a small reward; the other meant permanent employment and probably much honour.

The honour soon came. All Europe then believed in the philosopher's stone, which should transmute baser metals into gold; but Germany, the chosen home of the Rosicrucians, the birthplace of Cornelius Agrippa, Paracelsus, and many another half-philosopher, half-conjurer, believed in it more practically than any other country. Many a noble, ruined by the desolating wars of religion, thought to restore his fortunes by shutting himself up in his castle along with some chemist who had had wit enough to make a fool of him; there, surrounded with crucibles and retorts to mix cinnabar and sulphur and all sorts of metals and minerals in the hope that, if the stars were propitious, the longed-for "solvent" would at last reveal itself to him. Alexander Laski, paladin of Siradz in Bohemia, was one of these alchemist-nobles. In his palace of Laskoe he heard of the fame of Dr. Dee, and straightway came over to England to confer with him. In July, 1583, Dee was startled by receiving from Lord Leicester the news that Laski would come and dine with him next day. Poor man, he wasn't in a condition to receive princes; the tithes of Upton and Leadonham, his dispensation from which had not been confirmed, dribbled away a good deal before they got to him. So the Queen graciously gave him forty angels wherewith to make fit preparation for his guest. Laski came, and saw, and believed. But drugs were costly, and living in London still more so. He therefore proposed to take Dee and Kelley over to Bohemia, and there carry on the work. They sailed for Holland in September—a disastrous voyage for Dee; for no sooner was he out of the country than the mob, hating him as a wizard, broke into his house, wrecked his furniture, scattered his books (a few he recovered on his return six years after), and stole or broke up his chemical and astronomical apparatus—among the rest a quadrant by Chancellor, which had cost him twenty pounds, and a magnet for which he had paid thirty-three pounds. In happy ignorance of this, Dee reached Laskoe and worked on for some eight months; but "the stone" not showing itself, the paladin lost faith; and, unwilling to throw overboard one whom he had brought so far from his country, he handed Dee over to Emperor Rudolph the Second, at Prague. Rudolph was a dabbler in the occult sciences, but he did not take kindly to Dee, refused him a second interview, and advised him to try Stephen,

King of Poland. So a grand "séance" was held at Cracow; but Kelley could not have been in good form, for Stephen caught him playing tricks, though even this detection of his imposture did not open Dee's eyes. Thence they came back to the Emperor; but the Apostolic Nuncio was at Prague, and he proved as unfriendly as the English clergy—indeed, made such a protest that the pair were ordered to quit the imperial dominions within a week. But they had made one convert, Ursinus Count of Rosenberg, a Knight of the Golden Fleece and Chief Burggrave of Bohemia. Kelley had whispered to him, as the witches did to Macbeth, that he should rise from Burggrave to King of the Czechs; and so after much pains Count Ursinus got the decree so far revoked, that Dee and his companion were allowed to remain unmolested in any of the castles, cities, or towns belonging to the Lord of Rosenberg. This was a happy thing for men who for two months had been driven from one petty German principality to another, and Tribau in Bohemia, Ursinus's chief castle, became Dee's home for more than two and a half years. Wonders are said to have been wrought during his stay. Kelley produced a large quantity of "elixir," which he said he had found in the ruins of Glastonbury Abbey. From this a powder was manufactured of sovereign potency. One grain of it "projected" on an ounce and a quarter of mercury produced nearly an ounce of gold. To show his liege lady the Queen how her old servant was faring, Dee cut a piece out of a copper warming-pan, which was duly transmuted into gold, retaining its shape and size. Both the piece and the warming-pan were sent to her Majesty; and what more convincing proof could even the veriest sceptic have demanded? Gold, indeed, became as common at Tribau as it was in Jerusalem in the days of King Solomon, or in the Mexican Court when Cortez first arrived there. Arthur Dee, aged eight, and his playmate, the young Count of Rosenberg, played quoits with big gold rings; if they lost one, it was easily replaced. And now Kelley, who from the first had been restive, became so impudent that Dee, now more than sixty years old, "consecrated" his son as "skryer" and general assistant. He prayed long over him, and spent much time in teaching him; but the spirits refused to show themselves, and the doctor was obliged to capitulate and reinstate Kelley in his post of medium and general

assistant. Then the angels began to come more frequently than ever, and what they said was in some sort a foreshadowing of Joe Smith's revelations. But eventually quarrels became so frequent and so violent, that the Lord of Rosenberg interfered, and Kelley was banished, leaving the elixir, the glass, and the books, and went to Prague, where for a time, by maligning Dee, he ingratiated himself with Rudolph. Before many years were over, however, the Emperor saw through him, and put him in prison. He had knighted him not long before; but with Rudolph inconsistency was part of his nature. Kelley tried one night to escape; but his contrivance was not so good as that by which De Latude escaped from the Bastille, and he fell from a great height, bruising himself so badly that he soon died (1595). The strange thing is that Dee believed in him to the last; and though Count Ursinus insisted on his being sent away, kept up an affectionate correspondence with him as long as the scoundrel lived. Meanwhile, the fame of the gold quoits had travelled far. The Czar wanted to have the great alchemist all to himself—offered him a patent of nobility, and two thousand pounds a year, and a seat at the imperial table; but Dee would not desert Rosenberg. However, when in 1588, Elizabeth, excited by the warming-pan, invited him to return, home-sickness became stronger than gratitude. After thinking it over for four months, he started, leaving, let us hope, gold enough—whether in the form of quoits, or something else—to make up to the Count for his departure. He seems to have taken plenty with him, for he travelled in great state, with a guard of horse, three coaches for his family, and waggons for his goods, the cost of moving from Tribau to Bremen, where he took ship, being nearly eight hundred pounds! On his way he received a warm letter of invitation from the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, who had sheltered him from the Emperor while the Nuncio's decree was in force. He did not stop, but made the Prince the magnificent present of twelve Hungarian horses.

Elizabeth received him most favourably, but her favour ended in words. Owing to his absence, and the non-registering of that unlucky dispensation, he found himself wholly cut off from his clerical income; and so, after travelling across Germany in princely style, he was glad to accept a paltry royal Christmas gift of a hundred pounds—only half of which ever got to

him—and in his half-ruined Mortlake house to get together such of his books and instruments as were still in the neighbourhood. I suppose he had left his "elixir" with the Count. Anyhow, instead of golden quoits, Arthur Dee would have been very glad of silver pennies to buy bread with. Shunned as he was by almost all on account of his "practising of devilish arts," Dee was able to borrow from a few who still stuck to him what saved his family from starvation. His plate and jewellery, the gift of German princes, was pawned; and then he began to complain so loudly that he had been deluded back to England to his ruin that the Queen again began promising. She ordered Lady Howard to comfort Mrs. Dee with a letter and a present of a hundred pounds—Elizabeth was fond of making her presents with other people's money—and a promise that when a master was wanted for St. Cross, near Winchester, Dee should be the man. He was further promised a pension of two hundred pounds a year till the mastership should fall vacant—not out of the privy purse, but out of the revenues of the see of Oxford. Dee did not get St. Cross, nor the Deanery of Gloucester, for which he again petitioned. One wonders if his pension was paid, or only promised. At last, in 1595, he was made warden of the Collegiate Foundation of Manchester. His installation was a very pompous affair; but he did not get on well with the Fellows. They seem to have treated him as a mere exorcist—him, the first astronomer and alchemist in Europe, whose son had had gold quoits to play with. They brought before him seven people "possessed with devils," and desired him to cast them out. Dee refused; and when a local conjuror, Hartley, began to take them in hand, he threatened to prosecute him for practising unlawful arts. With Elizabeth's successor, however, Dee's position became so insecure, that in 1604 he petitioned James at Greenwich that he "might be tried and cleared of the horrible slander that he was or had been a conjuror, caller or invocator of devils," offering to be put to death if the charge could be proved. James, who was himself credited with dabbling in the black art, declined to give him a trial.

The end soon came. Life at Manchester was not worth living; so in 1604 Dee went back to Mortlake in very bad health and spirits. He had a new medium, one Hickman; but things went so badly with him that he had to eke out a subsistence

by selling his books. Often, no doubt, he thought of Tribau and the golden quoits, and the free, generous Bohemian life. Why had he come home to be deluded with Elizabeth's promises, and then worried by the pedant who now held the sceptre? He was packing up for a visit to Count Ursinus when death laid hold of him, in 1608. He lies in Mortlake Church.

James did not bear malice. He recommended Arthur Dee to the Czar, who wanted an English physician. The young man, restless like his father, was moreover under a cloud. When, after Westminster School and Oxford, he set up in London as a doctor, he fastened on his door a list of medicines, which he said were "sovereign" in certain diseases. The censors of the College of Physicians were at once down on him as "an intolerable cheat and impostor." So it was as well that he should leave England. For fourteen years he practised in Moscow, bringing back such golden opinions—though little else in the way of gold, for he had the family weakness of not being able to take care of money—that he was forthwith made one of Charles the First's physicians in ordinary. He chose, however, to live in Norwich, finding a kindred spirit in Sir Thomas Browne, the quaint mystic who wrote "*Religio Medici*," etc. Browne calls him "a persevering student in hermetical philosophy," and says he constantly affirmed that he had "ocularly, undecceavably, and frequently seen projection"—i.e. the manufacture of gold—"made in Bohemia." He, too, towards the close of his life, was starting for Bohemia to "fall upon the solemn process of the great work." But death was too quick for him. He was buried in Saint George's Church, where there is a fifteenth-century wall-fresco of the Saint and his white horse, and some of those guild palls, of which Norwich contains such good examples.

There is a curious story in Aubrey, that Casaubon's "*True and Faithful Relation*"—which, by the way, the Government tried to suppress; but the copies were bought up too quickly—is only a small part of the "*Actions with Spirits*." The manuscript volumes were buried. Cotton bought the field to dig for them, but many were much perished with damp. However, what is printed is more than enough. Anything more disappointing it is impossible to imagine. As Dee's latest biographer, Mr. Thomas Cooper, says: "The conferences are such a tissue of blasphemy and

absurdity that they might suggest insanity." Dr. Robert Hooke—the cantankerous claimant to Newton's theory of gravitation, who proposed a plan for rebuilding London after the Fire, and feathered his nest by getting himself made City surveyor—thought he had found in them a cryptogram, like Mr. Donnelly's. "They embody," said he, "a cipher for political secrets." Decidedly the most interesting thing about Dee is not his spiritualism—poor stuff then, as it is now, and always must be—but the man, his adventures, and his strange character. No one was ever less of an impostor; and yet surely imposture thrived by reason of his experiments.

THE NORTH-WEST MOSQUITO.

To adapt one's self to the customs of a strange country is not always easy, particularly where—as in some southern parts of America—the customs are uncomfortable.

In the "smiling South" I was frequently compelled by mosquito moonlighters to go to bed in the sand, with several inches of it over my body by way of counterpane, and a kind of meat-safe on my head for nightcap. But as I travelled farther north I fared worse.

Between the Fraser River in British Columbia and the Yukon River in Alaska lies a mosquito paradise. Here the insect hunts the grizzly bear, the Kuskutewak and Tchutche Indian, and other unpronounceable big game, and pounces on a stray traveller as a "*bonne bouche*." No sooner does the snow begin to melt in early spring, than the mosquito is on the war-path; and not till the earth is again icebound does this persistent *culex* cease its pursuit of prey.

That so small an insect should be so powerful seems incredible. But the North-West mosquito is as hardy as a Norseman, as bold as a Briton, and as evasive as the Artful Dodger, and crowds that northern land in countless millions.

It graduates in adventures like Gil Blas, accepts the most appalling disasters with the indifference of Sindbad, and treats bodily peril with the chivalrous scorn of Don Quixote. It is assailed by the equivalents of thunder and lightning, volcanic explosions, gunpowder, and dynamite, and escapes sudden death like a dipterous Wandering Jew.

Every time the little pest is whisked off a hand it is as if a ten-acre field turned topsy-turvy with a human being, yet the mosquito instantly returns to the same spot, humming merrily as ever. What man of us would be utterly regardless of such an awful earthquake, and do as much?

'Tis true a mosquito is familiar from infancy with the sudden upheaval of apparently solid surfaces, but this very experience proves its dauntless courage.

Never shall I forget my desperate battles with it! But the first encounter is the one most indelibly marked on my memory, and on my body; and even now, after many years, is one of the salient points in a by no means monotonous life.

Another youth and myself had camped on a little water prairie by the Shuswap Lake. Before turning in for the night we made up a "mosquito fire," and after creeping within our respective nets we lit our pipes, knowing what safety there was in smoke.

The freshly heaped on logs blazed brightly, fiery-red in the centre, with brilliant tongues of blue and purple flame, and thousands of glowing sparks shooting high into the still air; whilst clouds of smoke curled lazily upwards in tinted wreaths of grey, till lost in the gathering darkness. But the fire sank, and we got drowsy; and as I knocked out the ashes of my last pipe and curled cosily to sleep, I heard what sounded like the drone of bagpipes approaching over the distant horizon. It was the coming culex, and a flying scout immediately scrambled through my mosquito-bar.

Softly it piped its wee war-song like a Lilliputian lullaby, whilst taking an appetising constitutional around its prey. Not a glimpse of it could I catch, although the exasperating sing-song seemed sometimes close to my eyeballs. It came and went, rising and falling, now at one ear, now at the other; round behind my head, and then down at my feet. At last it suddenly ceased. Lightly as a shadow the "bag-piper" had settled on my ear, and as I felt its bite I cautiously prepared to "bag" the "piper."

The moment for vengeance had arrived! Had it? It was a stunning blow, and I fancy I have been slightly deaf in that ear ever since, but the agile insect skipped away unhurt, and resumed its war-song triumphantly.

Then another of the advanced guard

arrived, and then a squadron or two; and then the whole army charged pell-mell.

The net, as a North-West mosquito "bar," was a failure, evidently made for less gymnastic and more amiable mosquitoes. Gnats skimmed in without touching the meshes, and the leading culex battalions just closed their wings and folded up their legs and were hoisted through by the hosts behind. In they shot, with a cheerful hum, by brigades, whilst the symphony of the "bagpipes" outside grew still more savage. Then a skunk arrived on the scene of action. Not that the little beast could be seen. But the immediate atmospheric shock was circumstantial evidence sufficiently strong for anybody. What words can describe the tortures I endured during that sultry summer's night?—the tossing and the tumbling and the rolling to and fro, the tearing and scratching! We made smoky fires of resinous spruce and were almost stifled. We smoked so much tobacco that we felt ill. We scrubbed ourselves with brushes and tore ourselves with our nails, and only made matters worse. Then we held a council of war, and decided to try and keep cool. But to treat those myriads of demons with calmness, under the circumstances, would have taxed the philosophy of an Archbishop.

Next morning, when I looked in the back of my watch—our only "looking-glass"—I started back in amazement, wondering what manner of man I had become. Even my oldest creditor would never have recognised those frightful features, and the wife of my bosom would have repudiated me as a monstrous impostor. My watch-case reflected a countenance like a flaming full moon overrun with volcanoes. Was the Pythagorean doctrine true? And had my soul escaped from a mosquito-killed body into somebody else's? Was I now the man in the moon? Was I mad, or inebriated with nicotine, and did I see double? Double! Why, there were four cheeks on the left side and three on the right, two and a half upper lips, five eyelids and hardly any eyes, a nose and three-quarters, and ears all round the back of my head! At all events, that was how I appeared in the back of my watch—a most awful reflection! My lips kept getting into my mouth, and my eyelids into the residue of my eyes, whilst my dissipated nose seemed to fall all over my face. My skin felt red hot and as tight as a roasting apple's when about

to burst, and there was no doctor within hundreds of miles. My elephantine ears put hair-brushing out of the question, and my knobby head was swollen many sizes too big for my hat.

My companion was equally—or rather unequally—altered; one side of his usually good-looking face resembling Joe Miller's, and the other that of a conscientious hearse driver. Having no appetite for breakfast, we silently sat on two opposite logs lugubriously contemplating one another. Then we laughed till our enormous features expanded all over our heads, and the tears bounded down our numerous cheeks; and when we frowned fierce vengeance on our foes we looked, if possible, still more ludicrously foolish.

For what can a man do against an intangible insect of neither size nor weight to be dealt with? Were it big enough it might be hit with a stick, or jumped on—if a man could jump on the nape of his neck or get an acrobatic friend to do it for him. Had the insect sufficient solidity it could be taken hold of with tongs and put on the fire, or be flattened out with a brick. But the North-West mosquito is simply a microscopic ghost with a big mouth, and of far too subtle a nature for humanity to grasp; and the cause of its creation, like that of original sin, is still a conundrum.

This Trans-Rocky-Mountain territory also possesses a peculiar black fly and an invisible gnat, whose welcome to strangers almost equals that of the mosquito. Each species of bloodthirsty inhabitant pays its respects in turn, and a mutual aboriginal arrangement prevents the clashing of visiting hours.

When dawn proclaims the coming day, the early mosquito comes without any ceremony to breakfast. Over this the culex lingers till the sun has risen half-way to the zenith, although, from the mountainous nature of the country, the valleys are yet in shade. Then the black fly pays a visit, and feeds at the stranger's expense until sunset, as nearly as one can guess, for only from the coast, or the summit of an extra high mountain, or from a balloon, can human eyes here see the setting sun. Hardly has the helpless host speeded the parting black-fly guest, ere the mosquito hurries back for dinner; and whilst twilight softly sinks around the unhappy stranger, that hungry culex revels over its banquet and quaffs the flowing blood. And when darkness has become a silent fact,

clouds of invisible gnats drop in for supper, and spend the stilly night in festive phlebotomy.

Although the black fly and tiny gnat are awful, the mosquito is "uncrowned king" of the culex tribe. It is described by a celebrated naturalist as having a circle of lancet-like teeth. I never examined the creature's teeth under a microscope, and it always managed to keep me in a state of semi-blindness, but I believe in the lancets. I believe more than that, by a great deal. I believe that the North-West mosquito, in addition to those lancets, is furnished with a complete set of surgical instruments—a pair of meat saws, a suction-pump, and a minute steam-engine, etc.

I was once riding across a marsh, by the Mission on the west side of the Okkanargan Lake, and leading a pack mule. Suddenly a cloud of mosquitoes arose from the swampy grass, like an upward deluge. Of course the mule refused to move, although I tried every means of persuasion, and got badly stung by the mosquitoes for my pains. So, in the words of Caesar when he describes a retreat, "I retired to higher ground." On looking back I could hardly see the mule, so thick was the culex crowd. But, through my binoculars, I presently made out that the poor animal had laid down. In about an hour a slight breeze came, and the insects hurriedly finished their repast, and retired to digest it and renew their appetites. Alas! the poor mule was so nearly dead, or so obstinate, that I could not make it stand up; and its eyes were closed tight, owing to the swollen lids.

Under such circumstances it was useless for me to remain, as I could neither doctor the unfortunate beast nor keep the mosquitoes off it; so I transferred the pack on to the horse, and performed the rest of my journey on foot, by no means blessing those voracious mosquitoes. On repassing the spot some weeks afterwards, I found the poor mule's skeleton polished smooth and white.

With equal "sang-froid," the North-West mosquito attacks Indians and bears, and slaughters native dogs and such-like small game. Of course it can hardly kill a full-grown Indian; but should an orphan papoose stray too far from its village, the result is an infant funeral—to a dead certainty. Instantly seized upon by an insect army, the nude little savage feels itself pierced all over with darts, and opens its mouth for a juvenile war-whoop. But the warning yell has hardly passed the

baby's gums, ere the culex reserves hurl themselves into the gap, and fill it full to the very lips. Then that ill-used infant turns blacker in the face than usual, and hies in silence to the Silent Land.

My own personal observation of these interesting insects only extended as far north as Cariboo, and that was quite sufficient for me. I am not of a too curious disposition. We are, however, told by Lieutenant F. Schwatka, who commanded the Yukon Exploring Expedition in 1883, how bravely the mosquito flourishes in the far North. He says that the mosquito season lasts from when the snow is half off the ground until the first hard frost, some three or four months, during which time every living creature that can leave the valleys ascends the mountains to the snow-line, and that even there peace is not completely attained. At Fort Yukon, in latitude sixty-six degrees north, some of the summer days were the hottest and most insufferable he ever experienced. Every time the gallant Lieutenant sat down, "a regular down-east fog" of mosquitoes tested every thread in his clothes, trying to find a thin part to bore through. When he tried to shoot game, mosquitoes were so thick that it was absolutely impossible to see through the dense mass to take aim. And he felt confident that a nervous person without a mask would be soon killed.

Even the grizzly bear has to succumb. This statement seems preposterous, but the explanation is perfectly simple. Bruin, finding roots and berries scarce in one mountain, or smelling the odour of salmon, thinks he will cross the valley to another range. Covered with a heavy fur on the body, his eyes, nose, and ears are the vulnerable points, and here the mosquitoes congregate. At last, when the bear reaches a swampy stretch, the insects rise in myriads; and his fore-paws are kept so busy, striving to keep his eyes clear, that walking is no longer possible. Whereupon he becomes enraged, and, bear-like, rises on his haunches to fight. It is now a mere question of time, for the beast's eyes become so swollen from innumerable bites that he is rendered perfectly blind. He then wanders helplessly about until mired in the marsh, and so is starved to death.

Should any ambitious naturalist, or other curious man, resolve to study the manners and customs of the North-West mosquito in its native lair, let him first make his will; then go by Canadian

Pacific Railway to as near the centre of British Columbia as may be, timing his arrival for the beginning of the "mosquito season." From here he must ride or walk to the source of the Yukon, and paddle down that river leisurely, camping each night beneath the primeval forest or by the side of some verdant marsh. If he neither commits suicide nor gets stuck in the mud like a bear, he will probably arrive at Fort Yukon in a state of helpless insanity, in time to be frozen in for the winter. Eventually he will be made F.R.G.S. etc. etc., and of course publish three volumes on that interesting insect, "The North-West Mosquito."

A DAY IN THE OLD FLEMISH CITY.

"QUITE sure, monsieur," said the civil clerk, with a bow and a grin, as he turned his spectacles and blonde moustache towards me, after ransacking for the second time the recesses of one particular pigeon-hole, roomier than the others; "there are no letters, Poste Restante, for you to-day."

It was not a very heavy misfortune; but still the non-arrival of those expected letters compelled me to delay my departure, for another twenty-four hours, from the quaint old town in which I was a temporary sojourner, so that I had much idle time on my hands. Years ago I had made acquaintance with the ancient Flemish city itself, and had seen the few lions it had to boast of, the wondrous Belfry Tower, the Town Hall, with its gigantic stone chimneypiece, supported by marble figures larger than life, the Cathedral, and the dusky pictures by Van somebody which graced the chapel of one of the numerous convents. I had not, therefore, even the resource of putting myself under the tutelage of the hotel cicerone, eager to guide a traveller to the stock sights of the place; but preferred to stroll forth, alone and aimlessly, among the tortuous thoroughfares and beside the broad canals.

The huge old town, in the Middle Ages so bustling and important, seemed now a world too wide for the shrunken remnant of its population. Few industries appeared to exist, save that of a blouse-clad barrowman in wooden shoes that clattered like castanets on the cobble-stones of the uneven pavement, as their wearer's monotonous cry of "Soud!" awoke the unwilling echoes of sleepy streets which some

centuries since were replete with life, stir, and colour. There were the grand old mansions reared by princely merchants of the past, often with armorial bearings in carven stone conspicuous above the wide archway of the "porte cochère," and sometimes with monograms or mottoes on which the gold-leaf was not wholly tarnished by time's touch. But there were none of those picturesque signs of decay of which in Italy we see so much, in the shape of palaces crumbling to dust, of shattered castles, broken aqueducts, and perhaps the disjointed columns of a temple. In this Flemish city of yore there were no ruins, no grass-grown streets, no heaps of rubbish with marble fragments peeping from amidst bricks and potsherds, no ivy draping some venerable pile that tottered to its fall. All was distressingly neat, trim, and well cared-for. The paint and whitewash on every house, large or small, seemed fresh and spotless. The windows were rubbed to a brightness which spoke well for the domestic industry that tended them, and every available scrap of brass had been burnished till it glittered like Mambrino's helmet.

Still, save perhaps among the Dead Cities on the banks of the silted-up Zuyder Zee, there has rarely been seen such a Sleepy Hollow of a town as this over which I rambled, on a sultry summer afternoon. There was shade enough in the winding streets, where narrow shops, in which the humblest wares were vended, alternated with palatial dwellings of bygone magnates, while here and there from the open doorway of a little church, squeezed in as it were between two such mansions, came a whiff of incense and a deep growl of organ thunder. Very many houses had an oval mirror arranged in a black frame outside of each of the lower windows, to enable the indwellers to catch an early view of the features of the passers-by, and which, in obedience to a well-known law of optics, revealed too, should the pedestrian look up, the features of the gazer sitting inside, like a spider in a web. But even this mild source of amusement must have palled upon those who practised it, for scarcely a human figure came in sight. Now and again a sandalled Capuchin monk, looking thoroughly in harmony with the surroundings, would glide past, the other visible figures being mendicants with crutches, black-hooded Béguines, or blue-robed Sisters of Charity, and perhaps a

restaurateur's lad carrying back the shining tin which had contained some customer's twelve-o'clock dinner.

It was strange to me, used as I was to busy Paris and roaring London, to note the placid demeanour of those whose fortunes were bound up with those of the antique Flemish city. No one was in a hurry. The very beggars had a lazy whine. The shopkeepers mostly stood at their doors, listlessly chewing the stalk of some flower, or staring before them with lacklustre eyes, while humming a tune, nobly indifferent to business. There was one curiosity shop that it was difficult to pass, so crammed were its windows with carved ivory, and carved oak, with brass and bronze tortured into shapes beautiful and grotesque, with majolica ware and Japan porcelain, missals gorgeous with colour, cobweb laces yellowed by age, and ancient weapons, and books, and other relics of the past. But here, too, the venerable owner of these treasures, with horn-rimmed spectacles to assist his bleared eyes, sat in a high-backed fifteenth-century chair, poring over a tome which was probably printed at a similar date, and scarcely deigned to glance at the stranger who was inspecting his stock-in-trade. It was delightful to mark the indolent enjoyment of the red-shirted boatmen who lay languidly smoking on the raised poop of the gaudy barges which lay moored here and there on the wide canals, the quays of which were shaded by lime-trees amidst the rustling leaves of which the bees hummed noisily. It was hard to believe that this was the bustling, feverish, nineteenth century, and that our own insular Babylon was but a few hours' journey from this drowsy town.

At last, however, I found myself in a street wider than the rest, along which painted country waggons, full of lace-capped and kerchiefed maids and matrons, of brass cans, baskets, and empty crates, were jolting and rattling with thunderous din over the stones, drawn by sleek, wild-looking horses, which seemed to wear the minimum of harness and the maximum of bells, and which pranced and snorted in their exultant strength. These belonged, evidently, to well-to-do peasants who had sold their poultry and their tame rabbits, their butter and general dairy produce, and were now returning to the far-off farms where they dwelt among the polders, and the willows, and windmills, and flat meadows, grazed by red and white kine. Turning in a contrary direction to that of

the town gate towards which they were hastening, I presently came in sight of the great market-place of the city, where all of life and movement of the decayed burgh seemed to have concentrated itself for the nonce, since it was market-day, still a solemn and important event in old-world nooks like this.

When I had arrived on the previous day, and was traversing the town to reach my hotel, a regiment of heavy cavalry, mustering nearly a thousand steel breast-plates and shining helmets, had been drawn up there to be reviewed by a general, whose staff made quite an imposing show of white plumes and gold lace. Now the Grande Place was more peacefully filled with stalls, and booths, and crimson umbrellas, while the hum and buzz of voices, and the clatter of wooden shoes on the smooth, round stones of the sun-kissed pavement, contrasted forcibly with the torpor and death-like stillness of the tranquil streets through which I had been wandering. It was getting late in the day, and, no doubt, the scene was less animated than it would have been in the forenoon; but still there was no lack of buyers, no lack of sellers; while the commodities exposed for sale were various indeed. There were piles of oysters from the sea that lay not far away, and long cudgels of that matchless Flanders butter which is best made in farms which lie contiguous to the tall dykes which keep out the sea from the low-lying pastures. Summer snipe would alternate with masses of the guelder rose and the Dutch tulip. Cheeses and mushrooms, turkey poult, and pottery, heaps of luscious fruit, and gingerbread moulded into many a strange device, were jumbled together in picturesque confusion. Beside one stall loaded with capons, and rabbits preternaturally fat, might dangle the carcass of a roebuck, or perchance of a tiny wild-boar, whose budding tusks could hardly have harmed even the soft skin of an Adonis. Another was set out with wares expressly designed to tempt the peasant women from the country, displaying, as it did, bright-hued shawls and kerchiefs, heavy earrings and crosses of yellow gold, rosaries warranted to have been blessed at Rome, pictures of saints in rich colours, rhyming Flemish almanacs, and queer little books which professed to reveal the future for the small charge of one franc.

Here congregated, in considerable force,

the English colony of the town, wary, distrustful, but ever on the look-out for those good bargains which are never more appreciated than by the British *materfamilias* abroad. And the bargains themselves—the higgling and cheapening, the show of contempt on the one hand, of honest indignation on the other, the shrieking, stamping, and gesticulation, which seemed necessary adjuncts to the sale of a couple of chickens or a basket of peaches!

It is not too much to say that in Wall Street, or on the Royal Exchange, millions change hands without a tithe of the excitement and flurry which in that Flemish market appeared indispensable to the transfer of a ham or the vending of a crisp salad. The correct thing seemed to be for buyer and seller to engage in a vehement altercation which was only terminated by the purchaser's walking wrathfully away, pursued, after a little while, by the softening voice of the vendor, imploring him or her to return and take possession of the coveted goods on easier terms. And the wordy war appeared, nine times in ten, to have an amicable ending, and to lead to a deal.

Like a ghostly voice calling from afar, at quarter-hour intervals, rang forth the chimes of the renowned carillon, high up in the lofty tower of the belfry, where stone was carved almost to the delicacy of lacework by the chisels of long-dead masons, who put their hearts into their work.

That market, with its perpetual tussles of wit and will between those who sought to buy cheaply and those who wanted the highest procurable price, suited better with the surroundings—the hoods and lace caps, the blouses and sabots, the gabled houses and tall, narrow windows—than did the few plate-glass shopfronts and Frenchified cafés of the quasi-fashionable street beyond.

I lingered until the throng had thinned perceptibly, and then went back to my primitive hostelry, with its low-browed archway, sparsely furnished rooms, and a basket in the entrance hall, like a cradle for a giant baby, in which I was informed that the much-enduring waiter slept, adding the duties of a night porter to his own professional functions. They gave me a good dinner, however, in the gloomy little "salle," with its sanded floor; and after a while, as the twilight began to gather, I sauntered out again with my cigar, taking my way towards the leafy

boulevard, once a rampart, which flanks the outskirts of the town.

On the leafy boulevard, once a rampart, and bounded still on its outer verge by the water-lilied moat which was once a necessary protection from foreign foes and rival neighbours, the shadows crept slowly as the sun sank low and red behind the distant sand-hills of the coast-line. Save for a few pairs of lovers, whispering soft nothings in Flemish, and here and there a pipe-smoking burgher accompanied by his wife and children, nursemaid and perambulator, I seemed at this hour to have the shaded walks to myself, when suddenly I espied, dimly visible in the distance, something which might pardonably be mistaken for the tail of a comet that had gone astray, and was brushing the earth as it swept on. Fiery specks seemed to be dotted along a lengthening line, waving, swaying, like so many will-o'-the-wisps, as they came on. Higher up, many-coloured balls of fire were fluttering aloft, balls of red, of green, of blue, and anon of violet or yellow, as if ruby, and topaz, and amethyst, sapphire, and emerald, fresh from the cavern garden in which Aladdin was shut up by the necromancer, had been borne along by supernatural agency. A swell of music, however, suggested a more prosaic explanation of the phenomenon.

"C'est la Retraite, Monsieur—la Grande Retraite aux Flambeaux," said a corpulent Flemish citizen in answer to my question. "It occurs but once a year, so that monsieur is fortunate."

On came the lengthy procession, as higher and clearer arose the notes of martial music; on it came, accompanied by a hurrying crowd of sightseers who kept abreast of it, and filled up nearly the whole breadth of the elm-shaded boulevard, while the trampling of feet and the smothered hum of voices resounded through the hot air of the summer night.

"The Middle Ages still!" I murmured to myself, as I stood back to let the pageant pass. It was a sight worth seeing. The torch-bearers were for the most part soldiers and non-commissioned officers of the various regiments in garrison, so that sometimes the glare was reflected back from the polished corslets of a group of cuirassiers, and anon lit up the brass mountings of artillery accoutrements, or shone upon the pearl grey and dark blue of infantry uniforms. The different military bands, divided into sections, had their place in the processions, and drummed

and blew their best. But the long array was not by any means exclusively military in its character. Room had been found for those musical societies which in Belgium are so numerous, and which on holiday occasions take the place of the more pompous and privileged guilds of mediæval times. These had turned out in great force to swell the famous *Retraite aux Flambeaux*, and their music, and flags, and scarves, did much to augment the show.

There they were in their numbers, the rival societies of the Orpheon and of Saint Cecilia, patroness of musicians, their heavy banners flaunting aloft. That of the Orpheon, I noticed, was of purple velvet, stiff with gold embroidery; while Saint Cecilia's votaries made their tuneful march beneath an oriflamme of azure and silver. Of smaller associations there was no lack, and oddly chosen names were often inscribed upon their guidons and ensigns. The Green Bonnets were matched by the Bluecaps. The *Avenir* contrasted with the *Old Flemings*. The *Lion of Flanders* was followed by the *Fleur de Lys*, and this again by the *Patriotic*, the members of which wore red Phrygian caps and sang the *Marseillaise*. After the *Fanfarons* came the *Black Tulips*. All, however, played well, with manifest enthusiasm, and with creditable skill. And still the cressets flared, and the dancing balls of tinted light hovered high in air, like huge fire-flies on the wing.

The yellow glare of the torches went and came, their smoky gleam giving a weird and strange look to the long and straggling procession. They were of all sorts and sizes, from the humble link to the costly flambeau of white wax, or the flaming brand of solid resin. Very various, too, were the tinted lights, many of which were mere Chinese lanterns of paper, while others were globes of coloured glass, which sparkled like monstrous jewels as they swung to and fro, dangling from tall and slender poles. The march seemed endless. More tunics, more helmets, more breast-plates flashing back the torchlight, the bravery of the dismounted hussar, the more sombre garb of the artilleryman, lancers in white mantles and Polish caps, linesmen, sappers, and pioneers, soldiers and civilians, the civic guard, and the glee clubs, irregularly marshalled, but all entering heartily into the business of the hour. Elsewhere, such a display might have seemed incongruous, but not there—not

on that sandy boulevard, that was a rampart once, patrolled no doubt by steel-capped mercenaries from the Rhine, hired by the good city to keep out their brother free lances in the pay of some one else. The more mediæval it looked, the better it harmonised with that half-seen sea of steep roofs and church towers, and with the broad moat, where the sluggish water flowed so darkly among the wide leaves of the white-petalled lilies. The torches, the many-hued lamps, might just as well have suited with the fourteenth century as with our own, and reminded me of our English King Edward's hesitation as to whether or not to accept Van Artevelde's liberal offer that Flanders, with her myriads of looms and vast wealth, should be annexed for ever to the pastoral, hard-fighting England of that day.

A gallant spectacle it was; the darkness, which on that moonless night had deepened into a solemn chiaroscuro, was just enough to lend an air of mystery and wonder to the procession as it flowed by to the spirit-stirring music of the bands. The faces of those who walked in it looked pale in the fierce glare of the torches, or caught fantastic patches of light from the coloured lanterns. Even the crowd of moving spectators did not produce the effect of marring the picture, consisting, as it mainly did, of peasants from the country, who had lingered for the sight, and who, with some slight allowance for modern innovations, probably looked very like their precursors of the old Plantagenet or Tudor times. There were the coifs and caps and kirtles, the lace and ornaments that old masters transferred to canvas, the sabots of birchwood, the classic blouse that earned for a Roman Emperor his nickname of Caracalla, the coarse red jerkins of Flemish bargemen, and only a few black coats and cylindrical hats to jar with the more appropriate attire of the majority. Even the fact that a couple of brown-robed monks—out by license of their Superior, no doubt—stood at the corner of one of those stone staircases which gave access to the ancient rampart from the low-lying streets beneath, and looked benignly on, seemed to me a happy coincidence, and might have been quite as natural in the times when the House of Burgundy bore sway over the stiff-necked municipalities of the most opulent portion of their dominions.

They were all gone at last, soldiers and peaceful citizens, cresset and torch and

hovering balls of bright colour, music and flags, Orpheon and Saint Cecilia, the eager jostling crowd of gazers, the performers zealous in their duties, clashing cymbals, echoing drums, and resonant brass. I loitered there until the last gleams of emerald green and ruby red had faded out of my vision, and the distant notes of trumpet and trombone came but faintly to my ears, and then lit a fresh cigar and rambled back to my hotel, to muse, and perhaps to dream, of the queer sights, suitable to that time-forgotten place, but to few others, which on that day had forced themselves upon my notice. On the morrow the arrival of my letters set me free to depart, and steam forthwith bore me far away from that sleepy survival of the mediæval past of which I had caught some casual glimpses, and launched me again into the nineteenth century.

RED TOWERS.

By ELEANOR C. PRICE.

Author of "Gerald," "Alexia," etc., etc.

PART II.

CHAPTER XIII.

MRS. PERCIVAL'S OPPORTUNITY.

THE Marquise did not appear till nearly eleven o'clock, and Mrs. Percival came down about the same time. She had been writing a long letter to the Canon, who, with all his faults, was very fond of his wife, and had not much approved of this expedition. He and River Gate seemed a long way off, and Mrs. Percival sincerely wished herself back again. She did not think herself suited to foreign life or to tragedies.

The weight of Celia's and Vincent's disloyalties, however, rolled off when she came down into the cheerful brilliancy of that morning at La Tour Blanche. The lightness and brightness of everything struck her with amazement: Celia's careless, laughing talk—with M. de Cernay, of all people, who had come to breakfast, as well as two or three other sportsmen, before going off to shoot—Achille's politeness and fine looks, dressed as he was in a linen shooting-coat which would have tried most people. He was telling Vincent and Paul, who were got up in a different style, that before they had walked far they would wish their English clothes back in England. Then, the dining-

room was so pretty, the shutters nearly closed, rays of sunlight falling in on the polished breakfast-table with its silver dishes and heaps of fruit and flowers; and Antoinette, her dark eyes smiling, free from trouble for the moment, as it seemed, sat beside Mrs. Percival and talked to her in a charming little way, begging her to come and see her garden and her chickens.

It was all more French than anything Mrs. Percival had ever seen in France, except long ago, in time spent with Madame de Ferrand. She had felt the fascination of it then; she felt it now; only, behind her involuntary enjoyment lay that feeling of unreality, of dancing on a volcano, of the deception of a dream, which had haunted her ever since she arrived.

After breakfast she went out on the terrace with Antoinette, and watched the sportsmen and their dogs getting ready to start. All the arrangements were very un-English: the men in linen jackets and straw hats, with bags to carry their own game; each man followed by his own dog, and no keepers to be seen. There was immense talking and excitement, and hurrying to and fro. Mrs. Percival did not quite know what it was all about, and found the sun, which was blazing down on the terrace, decidedly too hot. She went back into the cool, dark hall, and turned into the salon. Antoinette, who was playing with the dogs and watching her father, did not follow her. Paul, too, was out there, rather happy and amused. Jack, a dog constant to old associations, had attached himself to him, and would not leave him. Di seemed more to value her privilege of following Monsieur de Montmirail. The Frenchmen very much admired these Clumbers, who were very clever dogs at poking here and there in French fashion, and driving the game out of hedges and gorse thickets, besides being just as happy in the water as on land.

In the salon, which was almost dark—only crossed by lines of light from the shutters—Mrs. Percival found Celia lying back in an armchair, and Vincent standing at a corner of the mantelpiece, looking down at her and talking. Mrs. Percival was quite conscious that he stopped short when she came in.

"You are going to shoot, Vincent, are you not?" she said, and her tone was unusually sharp for the gentle Mrs. Percival.

"Yes, madam," said Vincent, not crossly, but in a resigned sort of way.

"Well—they are ready to start."

"Oh, no, they will chatter for some time yet. I know their little ways," he answered, and he looked at Celia and laughed. "I mean to take it easy, and I don't see the use of getting a sun-stroke to begin with."

"You a soldier, and from India! And as to your manners—" said Mrs. Percival. "I wonder you can endure him, Celia."

Celia sat motionless, smiling lazily, looking down at the fan she was playing with.

"She likes me very much," said Vincent. "Don't you, belle Marquise—belle cousine!—that little ass M. de Cernay is always calling you 'belle voisine.' I wonder how you can stand his impertinence, really."

"Nonsense," said Celia. "Yes, Aunt Flo, you are right; he is unbearable. So utterly unmanageable—but I think it must be partly your fault for bringing him up so badly."

"Oh, no doubt, I dare say it is entirely my fault," answered Mrs. Percival, with a touch of coldness.

She sat down in a low chair beside a little velvet table, on which were some pretty old things—snuff-boxes, Montmirail miniatures, and so on. She began examining these things one by one, with an air of interest, while Celia still played with her fan, and Vincent lounged in his corner.

"Who is this—" Mrs. Percival was beginning, after a minute of silence, when the door was pushed open behind her, and Achilles's voice said:

"Is Celia here? Ah! Would you come to me in the library for a moment, mon amie?"

His wife looked round with an air of surprise, lifting her eyebrows; then got up slowly, and walked languidly out of the room.

Vincent immediately, with a sort of sigh, threw himself into the chair she had left. Mrs. Percival looked at him, while she played with the miniatures.

"Isn't this a jolly room?" he said, after a moment. "Fancy you, of all people, finding your way here, and actually bringing Romaine with you. My father was a wise man, I suppose, as usual; he preferred staying at home."

"Fancy you spending your whole life here. That strikes one as still funnier," said Mrs. Percival.

"Well, I don't know any just cause or impediment," said Vincent, staring at her fiercely, but speaking good-humouredly enough. "Celia and I were always good

friends, and now we are better friends still. She made a tremendous mistake once; but it is always possible to make the best of things, you know."

"It is not always either right or possible to escape the consequence of one's mistakes," said Mrs. Percival rather stiffly.

"Very neatly put, my dear mother; but people generally do what they can in that way."

"And, Vincent, as to Celia's mistake—of course you mean her marriage—never was a person more bent on making a mistake of the kind. If you had been at home things might have been different. I can't say——"

"They certainly would."

"Well, I assure you that she seemed perfectly satisfied with what she was doing. But Celia, to me, is incomprehensible. My opinion is, that she has no heart at all. I have told you so before, Vincent. I dare say it amuses her to have you here, but as to caring—if you were to get shot accidentally to-day, for instance," said Mrs. Percival, warming to the subject, "it would be no great trouble to her. She would eat her dinner just as comfortably after it."

Vincent himself had told Celia the same sort of thing often enough, but his mother's saying it made him rather angry.

"You certainly don't understand her," he said. "However, if you were right—would you at this moment, may I ask, prefer that Celia should be desperately in love with me?"

"Prefer! Don't talk in that wicked way, Vincent," said his mother.

"Very well," he said. "Then don't you see what a safe state of things it is? Madame la Marquise—I adore her, there is no one else worth looking at in the world, in my opinion—is absolutely above danger. She has supreme good sense—I grant you, she is a little cold, but so much the better for her. There never lived a woman more able to take care of herself, and to enjoy life a little, too, in spite of her stupid marriage."

"Stupid marriage! He is much, much too good for her."

"Exactly; that's the stupidity of it. Now are you comforted, my dear soul? Do you see that my staying here does no harm to anybody, except myself?"

"No, I don't see," said Mrs. Percival. "If you were not here, people would not talk, and Celia would make herself contented, and Achille de Montmirail would be happy, which I can plainly see he is not. He is

too nice to make himself disagreeable about it, but I can see that you ought to go away—and you know it yourself, too. You talk about being 'good friends' with Celia, but people have eyes, and are quite sharp enough to see the meaning of that."

"Now I should like to know who has been talking to you about it?" began Vincent, in his most obstinate tones. "Some one has put you up to all this; you have not been here long enough to see for yourself. Come, confess; you will have to tell me in the end. Not that little beast De Cernay, in the train yesterday? Or does it all spring out of Romaine's imagination? Scandal was never in your line, so I shan't give you all the credit to yourself."

Mrs. Percival had no time to answer his questions, for just then, much to her relief, Celia came back into the room.

"I wish people wouldn't be tragical," she said, with her pretty smile. "Achille has just wished me good-bye as if he was going off to the wars, and never expected to come back again. Is Vincent gone? Oh, there you are! The room is so dark, I can't see. Well, they are starting now, so you had better wake up and go with them."

Vincent got up, but lingered a moment. The talk with his mother, for whom, after all, he had some respect, had left a shadow on his face.

"You won't be contented till you have got rid of us all," he said. "What are you going to do when we are gone to the wars?"

"We are going to drive to Bois-le-Comte, if Aunt Flo would like it," said Celia.

"Bois-le-Comte! There's a dead rose in the moat somewhere," he murmured, so that Mrs. Percival could hardly hear him.

But she heard Celia's laughing answer:

"Oh, good dog, you are waiting for a bone," and saw her give Vincent the rose she was wearing.

He went out without further farewells; and then Celia turned to her aunt, with her usual matter-of-factness, and began to explain what Bois-le-Comte was, and who lived there, and how the drive was very pretty, though rather long. Mrs. Percival was quite ready to drive anywhere or do anything. Her cheeks were burning with the excitement of talking to Vincent. She was half-frightened now at her own courage in facing him, and yet glad that she had done it. Certainly her son was a more hopeful subject than her niece, though she could not say much for him. He loved his mother in a sort of way, she believed,

and in his more reasonable moments understood her motives; but as for Celia, once more, and this time for good, she gave up any idea of interfering with her in any way. She was far too stately, far too self-satisfied, far too cold, this woman who could come in laughing at her husband's affectionate good-bye. That little touch repelled Mrs. Percival from Celia more than she could have thought possible. Till then, some kind of old superstitious affection, lingering on in spite of all her own convictions, had half kept her from believing what she so often said, that Celia had no heart.

"I should like a drive very much—whenever you like," she said cheerfully, determined not to be oppressed by Celia.

"Very well. At two o'clock, then, please," said the Marquise. "I wonder if Antoinette will come." She went to the window and pulled open the shutters. "Netta! why do you stand out there in the sun, petite, without even a parasol? My aunt and I are going to Bois-le-Comte this afternoon; will you come too?"

Antoinette, who was standing rather dreamily on the terrace, looked round at her, and then walked slowly up to the window. Her usual ready sweetness seemed for once to have deserted her.

"My dear child, you are stupefied with the heat!" cried Celia. "Come in at once. You had better lie down for an hour. What do you say about going with us?"

Antoinette stepped in at the window. She looked pale and odd; her eyes were frightened and confused, and she gazed at her stepmother with a sort of anxiety.

"Do you feel ill, my dear?" said Mrs. Percival kindly, going up to them, and taking the girl's hand.

The friendly human touch seemed to bring Antoinette back to her senses.

"Oh no, madame, thank you; I am very well," she answered politely. "But, maman, if you will excuse me, I should like to stay at home this afternoon."

"You know I only want you to please yourself," said Celia, a little coldly.

"Did papa say anything to you about coming home early?"

"No, not a word."

"Ah! when I wished him good-bye, he said, rather in a hurry, 'I may be at home early, perhaps long before the others. You will arrange;' and then M. de Cernay called to him, and he went off at once. I did not know what he meant."

"If he wants people to attend to his

sentences he should finish them," said Celia, with a slight laugh. "There certainly is nothing for you to arrange; and he would not wish you to stay at home from a drive for him."

"I don't know. I think he did——"

"As to coming home early, that is nonsense. Of course he will stay with his friends. However, petite, please yourself."

"Thank you, maman. I think I will stay at home," said the girl; and without saying any more she went out of the room.

"That poor child has a way of taking up all her father's fancies," said the Marquise. "Now, Aunt Flo, as we have a little light in the room, I should like to show you my tapestry. I really am rather proud of it, and I know you are a good judge. These Frenchwomen work very well, but I don't think they have much notion of colour."

Mrs. Percival was ready to admire anything, and for the next few hours, talking the old art jargon, driving, visiting, seeing new country, and amused by new ways and new people, she meekly followed Celia's lead. Nobody could say that the Marquise de Montmirail's manner to her nice English aunt was not perfection.

At La Tour Blanche the day went on slowly.

At first there were shots to be heard, but they died away gradually in the distance, as the sportsmen strayed farther from home. After the carriage had driven away, Antoinette came out again, and walked down with Suzanne to the village, to pay a visit to the Sisters, and arrange something about church decoration for the following Sunday; she always supplied flowers for the altar of Our Lady.

One of the Sisters, who was old and friendly, and had known Mademoiselle Antoinette for years, hinted a question with respectful smiles:

"Was it true that she was going to leave them all, one of these days?"

"Pas encore!" said Suzanne, shaking her head and laughing.

Antoinette coloured faintly.

"No, ma sœur," she said. "I love the old Tour Blanche far too much to leave it."

She came out with Suzanne from the Sisters' little house, the old one nodding her white cap and smiling at the door, into the sunny village street, where yellow leaves were beginning to fall. It was three o'clock, the Angelus was ringing, and people looked up from their work for a moment. A few women crossed them—

selfes; among these were Antoinette and her old nurse, as they came down over the white bridge, where the water rippled and ran, into the golden shade of the avenue.

Later in the afternoon, when the shadows were beginning to lengthen, Antoinette put on her large pinafore tied with red ribbons, and went round to feed her chickens. Her little terrier, Rataplan, went with her, and when this business was done, they came back together and sat down on a bench in a shady corner of the terrace, the only live things to be seen in that great white square of walls and towers, as they lay sleeping in their usual drowsy quietness under the clear stillness of the afternoon sky. Antoinette sat with her hands folded, and a certain wistful wonder in her eyes; she looked childish enough still, her black hair curling under her round, shady hat; but she had learned a good deal since the beginning of that summer, since the day—how well she remembered it—when Vincent Percival first arrived from Paris.

She was still too young to know that there are hurts which are hopeless, and cannot be healed; and even now she thought that the old days, so happy by contrast, might come round again—the days when Celia seemed to find all her happiness at home, with the two who certainly found theirs in her. Well, it was all very strange, and very disappointing; and perhaps even her father's friend, Mr. Romaine, with those kind, wonderful eyes of his, could not do much good. French girls are not usually shy or conscious; Antoinette certainly was not; but she knew what shyness was as she sat there and thought a little of Paul, her eyes drooping at the remembrance of his, a smile trembling about her mouth, though she knew she was doing wrong.

"Mon Dieu! I am very wicked and silly," she sighed to herself at last; and just then Rataplan gave a low growl.

Then he sprang down barking from the bench, and rushed in great excitement down the steps into the courtyard. Then he came back again, barking violently at another dog, which climbed the steps wearily, its tongue hanging out, and came grovelling in spaniel fashion along the terrace, and laid itself down at Antoinette's feet.

"Chut, Rataplan! what is this?" cried the girl wildly, for she saw that the dog was Di, who had gone out with her father.

The poor animal had been shot, for blood was flowing slowly from a wound in its neck, staining all the white satiny curls that were as beautiful as ever. Poor Di lay and panted in a shady place, looking up to Antoinette with her gold-brown eyes, which seemed to speak, to beg for something.

"Oh, my poor dog, who has hurt you? Quelle horreur!" cried the girl. "Lie still then; I must fetch you some water;" and she dashed into the house, screaming for Suzanne. But Suzanne, perhaps asleep after her walk to the village, did not hear.

Antoinette brought Rataplan's little pan of water from the hall, and made Di drink, which she did eagerly, and bathed the wound, which seemed to be only slight, and the poor clotted hair, while the old dog licked her hands and gazed with piteous eyes.

But Antoinette, in all her grief and sympathy, was not prepared for what followed. The dog struggled to her feet, and set off, lame as she was, towards the steps. Antoinette stood watching her with wonder, and then a sudden terror made her heart stand still. Di came back to her, took a corner of the white pinafore in her mouth, and pulled it gently; then running back to the steps again, stopping, looking back, whining suddenly a little, as if to say: "Don't you understand me?"

Antoinette followed her a few yards, and then she ran down the steps, and stood wagging her tail for a moment, looking up with those speaking eyes of hers. So she went on down the courtyard, and by this time Antoinette understood, though in a strange, unconscious way. For she never could remember what she thought, or feared, or felt, or which way they went, or how she scrambled through hedges, jumped ditches, and flew along lanes, in her wild run with Di across country, that silent, terrible afternoon.

Now Ready, price Sixpence.

THE EXTRA

SUMMER NUMBER

OF

All the Year Round,

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS.

Sold by all Booksellers, and at Railway Bookstalls.

The Right of Translating Articles from ALL THE YEAR ROUND is reserved by the Authors.

J
od
ts
ls
Di
ng
es,
ae-

a ?
ill
nd
for
ep
ar.
an
nk,
he
ht,
old
ith

nd
nat
et,
rds
her
ror
ack
ore
nen
ng,
tle,
e ?"
and
ood
ing
So
by
ugh
she
ght,
hey
ugh
ong
ross

R

alls.

s.

rect, E.C

GOLD MEDAL,

PARIS, 1878.



JOSEPH GILLOTT'S

CELEBRATED

STEEL PENS.

SOLD BY ALL DEALERS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

Every Packet bears the fac-simile Signature,

J. A. Gillott

NEWEST INVENTION—
GREATEST NOVELTY.



They fit perfectly, and are far superior to all the other Corsets I have tried."—(Signed) MARIE ROZE.

The **Y & N** Patent

DIAGONAL SEAM CORSET

Patented in England and on the Continent. Will not split in the seams nor tear in the Fabric.

Exquisite model. Perfect comfort. Guaranteed wear.

Beware of worthless Imitations. Every genuine Y & N Corset is stamped, "Y & N Patent Diagonal

Seam Corset, No. 116," in oval.

Gold Medal, New Zealand Exhibition, 1882.

Gold Medal, HIGHEST AWARD for Corsets, London International Exhibition, 1884.

LATEST AWARD!!! Gold Medal, International Exhibition, Edinburgh, 1886.

Sold by all Drapers & Ladies' Outfitters in United Kingdom & Colonies

JEWSBURY & BROWN'S

ORIGINAL & ONLY GENUINE

Oriental
CLIMATE **Tooth** **Paste**
PROOF. **SIXTY YEARS IN USE.**
CAUTION.
THE GENUINE ONLY IS SIGNED
JEWSBURY & BROWN.

All Perfumers and Chemists. 1/6 & 2/6 Pots.

THE QUEEN'S PATENT
FOR UTILITY.

PACKETS—
1d. and Upwards.



THE
GREAT DIRT EXTRACTOR
—PERFECTION.

Sold by all Grocers
and Soap Dealers.

BORAX EXTRACT OF SOAP

PATENT BORAX CO., Patentees, Sole Makers. Works: BIRMINGHAM.

5 GOLD MEDALS

BORWICK'S BAKING POWDER

FOR CAKES, PASTRY
PUDDINGS AND
WHOLESALE BREAD

NEW ORIENTAL BANK CORPORATION,
LIMITED.

Capital, £2,000,000; Subscribed and Paid-up, £500,000.
HEAD OFFICE: 40, THREADNEEDLE STREET, LONDON.
BANKERS: BANK OF ENGLAND, UNION BANK OF LONDON, LIMITED, and BANK OF SCOTLAND.

EDINBURGH AGENT: 23, ST. ANDREW SQUARE.
BRANCHES:—Bombay, Calcutta, Colombo, Madras, Mauritius, Hong-Kong, Malé (Seychelles), Shanghai, Singapore, Yokohama, and in Australia at Melbourne and Sydney.

The Bank buys and sells bills of exchange, makes telegraphic transfers, issues letters of credit and circular notes available throughout the world, forwards bills for collection, undertakes the purchase and sale of securities, holds them for safe custody, and realises interest and dividends; collects pay and pensions, pays insurance premiums and club subscriptions, and transacts banking and agency business generally.

INTEREST ALLOWED ON DEPOSITS.

At 3, 5, or 7 years' notice, 5 per cent. per annum.
" 9 to 12 months " 4 1/2 " "
" 6, 7, and 8 " 4 " "
" 3, 4, and 5 " 3 " "

GEORGE WILLIAM THOMSON, Secretary.

Gold Medals: Edinburgh and Liverpool Exhibitions, 1886.

Fry's

**PURE
CONCENTRATED
SOLUBLE**

Cocoa



PREPARED BY A NEW AND SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC PROCESS.

Sir CHARLES A. CAMERON, M.D.—“I have never tasted Cocoa that I like so well. It is especially adapted to those whose digestive organs are weak, and I strongly recommend it as a substitute for tea for young persons.”

W. H. R. STANLEY, M.D.—“I consider it a very rich, delicious Cocoa. It is highly concentrated, and therefore economical as a family food. It is the drink *par excellence* for children, and gives no trouble in making.”

Ask your Grocer for a sample, gratis, and Copy of Testimonials.

36 PRIZE MEDALS AWARDED TO J. S. FRY & SONS, BRISTOL, LONDON, and SYDNEY.

A TURKISH BATH IN YOUR OWN ROOM. TO THE STALWART A LUXURY. TO THE INVALID A NECESSITY.

AFTER HUNTING, DRIVING, SHOOTING, FISHING, RIDING, OR ANY EXCESSIVE FATIGUE.
FOR RHEUMATISM, GOUT, LUMBAGO, SCIATICA, ECZEMA, AND SKIN, LIVER, AND KIDNEY AFFECTIONS.
SILVER MEDAL, INTERNATIONAL HEALTH EXHIBITION, 1884. HIGHEST AWARD, International Medical and Sanitary Exhibition, 1887. SILVER MEDAL (Highest Award), National Health Society, 1883.



Apparatus for use under Chair, with best Cloak, Tinned Iron Supports, in Box, 50s. Apparatus for Bed, in Box, with pair of Wicker frames, 45s. The Bath combined, for Bed and Chair, 70s. *The Lancet*.—“This instrument is very complete. It is portable, and can be packed in a box less than 14 inches square. It is cheap, and it acts promptly.” *Sanitary Record*.—“Will be found a luxury, as well as a valuable remedial resource.” Also makers of Bronchitis Kettles, Invalids' Baths, Bed-Baths, Bed-Pans, Nursery Baths, Infants' and Invalids' Food Warmers, &c. Illustrated Catalogue



CAN BE USED FOR HOT AIR OR VAPOUR. post free for three stamps.

SOLE INVENTORS AND MANUFACTURERS,

JAMES ALLEN and SON, 22 and 23, Marylebone Lane, London, W.

Crosse & Blackwell's

FRESH FRUIT JAMS,

MADE FROM CHOICE FRESH FRUITS AND
REFINED SUGAR ONLY,

Are Sold by Grocers, in 1-lb., 2-lb., 3-lb., and 4-lb. Jars.

BEARING CROSSE & BLACKWELL'S NAMES IN FULL ON THE LABELS.